

Application No. 10/617,041
Amendment Dated November 23, 2005
Reply to Office Action of September 23, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS:

By the present amendment, claims 1, 16, 17, 20, 29, 38, 43, 49 and 52 are amended. Claims 1 – 6 and 8 - 56 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 20, 29, 43 and 49 being independent.

Applicant has carefully considered the contents of the Office Action and respectfully requests reconsideration and reexamination of the subject application in view of the explanations noted below.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112(second paragraph)

Claim 45 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the claim recites “replacing the transformer with a higher rated transformer” without providing actual ratings for either of the transformers.

Pursuant to MPEP § 2173.02, if the language of the claim is such that a person of ordinary skill in the art can interpret the metes and bounds of the claim so as to understand how to avoid infringement, then the claim is not indefinite. Claim 45 clearly recites replacing the existing transformer with a higher rated transformer. Such claim language would be easily understood by one of ordinary skill in the art such that the notice function required by 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is served by providing a clear warning to others as to what constitutes infringement.

Furthermore, the language of claim 45 is similar to that used in Orthokinetics, Inc. v. Safety Travel Chairs, Inc., 806 F.2d 1565 (Fed. Cir. 1986), which held that the limitation of a “front leg portion ... so dimensioned as to be insertable through the space between the doorframe of an automobile and one of the seats thereof” was not indefinite. Similarly, claim 45 defines the transformer with reference to its environment. “[T]here is nothing wrong with defining the dimensions of a device in terms of the environment in which it is to be used.” Orthokinetics, 806 F.2d at 1575-1576. Thus, reciting “replacing the transformer with a higher rated transformer” merely defines the transformer with reference to its environment.

Therefore, the rejection of claim 45 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, is improper, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and 103(a)

Claims 1, 10, 14 – 16, 18 – 19, 20, 24 – 28, and 49 - 53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,639,841 to Salestrom (the Salestrom '841 patent). Claims 2 – 6, 8, 9, 11 – 13, 21 – 23, 37, 41, 42 and 54 - 56 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Salestrom '841 patent in view of Hatch (non-patent literature). Claims 29 – 36 and 39 - 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Salestrom '841 patent. Claims 17 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Salestrom '841 patent in view of Hatch (non-patent literature) and in further view of U.S. Patent No. 2,713,668 to Gibilisco (the Gibilisco '668 patent). Claims 43, 44 and 46 - 48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,283,612 to Hunter (the Hunter '612 patent). Claim 45 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Hunter '612 patent in view of Hatch.

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection, since the Salestrom '841 and Hunter '612 patents clearly do not disclose, teach or render obvious the subject matter of independent claims 1, 20, 29, 43 and 49, which are amended as suggested by the Examiner.

Independent claims 1, 20, 29, 43 and 49 recite, inter alia, a push-in wire connector having a movable member adapted to releasably retain an inserted wire and an activating member adapted to move the movable member to release the wire such that the inserted wire is quickly released from the push-in wire connector.

The Salestrom '841 patent discloses a modular lighting system 10, as shown in FIG. 3. A transformer 46 is provided power through wire 48 and supplies power through wire 52. The transformer 46 has a male connector (plug) 44 and a female connector 50 that are connected to the transformer by the wires 48 and 52, respectively. The lighting module 18 has a male plug portion 22 from which connector elements 24 protrude at a first end and a corresponding female plug portion 26 at a second end, as shown in FIGS. 3 and 4. The male plug portion 22 of the lighting module is either plugged into the female connector 50 of the transformer or into a corresponding socket 28 of another lighting module 18. A plurality of lighting modules 18 may be connected to one another in an end-to-end relationship by the

male and corresponding female portions of each lighting module. A light harness 56 may be used to connect light modules 18.

The Hunter '612 patent discloses a light emitting diode light strip, as shown in FIG. 1, in which a hollow tube 20 (FIG. 2) houses a printed circuit board 22 (FIGS. 3 and 4). Plugs 62 connected to opposite ends of the tube 20 connect the tube to a connector of a power supply 64 or to a connector of another tube, as shown in FIG. 16. The wires connecting the plugs 62 to the tube 20 are not removable from the tube. Furthermore, the wires connected to the power supply 64 are not removable from the power supply. As shown in FIG. 15, the power supply 64 is not intended to be mounted in the same area as the hollow tube 20, as the power supply is mounted on the floor and the tube is mounted on the upper shelf of a cabinet.

The Hatch reference is a secondary reference cited for disclosing a transformer having an electronic short circuit and over load protection. The Gibilisco patent is a secondary reference cited for disclosing an electrical connector having a quick-release button.

Neither the Salestrom '841 patent nor the Hunter '612 patent disclose a push-in wire connector having a movable member adapted to releasably retain an inserted wire and an activating member adapted to move the movable member to release the wire such that the inserted wire is quickly released from the push-in wire connector, as recited in amended independent claims 1, 20, 29, 43 and 49.

All the connections between the various components of the lighting system of the Salestrom '841 patent are plug and socket connections. The Salestrom '841 patent does not disclose or suggest a push-in wire connector having a movable member adapted to releasably retain an inserted wire and an activating member adapted to move the movable member to release the wire such that the inserted wire is quickly released from the push-in wire connector. Moreover, because the lighting system of the Salestrom '841 patent discloses plug and socket connections, the Salestrom '841 patent does not contemplate connecting a wire to any component of its lighting system. Thus, the Salestrom '841 patent does not disclose a push-in wire connector between any component of the lighting system as recited in amended independent claims 1, 20, 29, 43 and 49.

The Hunter '612 patent does not disclose the light emitting diode light strip having push-in wire connectors as recited in independent claims 1, 20, 29, 43 and 49. The hollow tube 20 and the power supply 64 appear to be connected by a plug and socket connection, as

shown by connectors 62. Thus, the Hunter '612 patent does not disclose or suggest a push-in wire connector having a movable member adapted to releasably retain an inserted wire and an activating member adapted to move the movable member to release the wire such that the inserted wire is quickly released from the push-in wire connector. Moreover, because the light emitting diode light strip of the Hunter '612 patent discloses plug and socket connections, the Hunter '612 patent does not contemplate connecting a wire to any component of its light strip. Thus, the Hunter '612 patent does not disclose a push-in wire connector between any component of the lighting system as recited in amended independent claims 1, 20, 29, 43 and 49.

Furthermore, the cited secondary references (the Hatch reference and the Gibilisco '668 patent) do not cure the deficiencies noted above with regard to the Salestrom '841 and Hunter '612 patents, i.e., the absence of a push-in wire connector having a movable member adapted to releasably retain an inserted wire and an activating member adapted to move the movable member to release the wire such that the inserted wire is quickly released from the push-in wire connector. Therefore, the Salestrom '841 and Hunter '612 patents in view of the Gibilisco '668 patent and the Hatch reference do not disclose or render obvious the claimed features of Applicant's invention as recited in independent claims 1, 20, 29, 43 and 49.

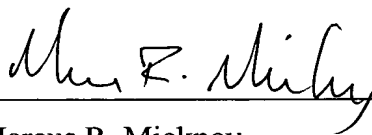
Claims 2 – 6, 8 - 19, 21 – 28, 30 – 42, 44 - 48 and 50 - 56 being dependent upon independent claims 1, 20, 29, 43 and 49, respectively, are also allowable for the above reasons. Moreover, these dependent claims recite additional features further distinguishing them over the cited patents, such as the transformer having a mountable side adapted to mount the transformer to an object of claims 5, 22 and 54; a dimmer switch connected to the electrical power supply wire of claims 12 and 37; the movable member being selected from a group consisting of selected from the group consisting of a connector spring, a detent, a pressure plate, a leaf spring, an aperture defining capture teeth and combinations thereof of claims 16 and 38; the activating member being a quick-release button of claim 17; and replacing the transformer with a higher rated transformer of claim 45. Therefore, dependent claims 2 – 6, 8 - 19, 21 – 28, 30 – 42, 44 - 48 and 50 – 56 are not anticipated or rendered obvious by the cited patents, particularly within the overall claimed combination.

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In view of the foregoing amendments and comments, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 – 6 and 8 - 56 are in condition for allowance. Prompt and favorable action is solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Marcus R. Mickney", is written over a horizontal line.

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Dated: Nov. 23, 2005